

**PA STATE LEGISLATIVE 2022 QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR PHILLY NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS**

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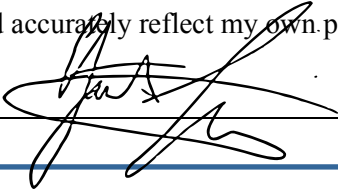
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CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: JONATHAN LOVITZ

Office Sought: State Representative | District 182

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature:  _____ Date: 2.17.2022

Please complete, sign and return this form via Email to:

Gloria Gilman: gmgilman@gmail.com

and

Stan Shapiro: shapsj@comcast.net

2022 PA State Legislative Questionnaire



BACKGROUND *Please note: answers to questions 7-9 are optional.*

1. What, if any, elected or appointed government office(s) have you held?

This is my first time as a candidate, though I have served on many commissions and councils for Governors and Mayors in Pennsylvania, as well as New York and Florida.

2. If you have previously held a government office:

a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved?

b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on?

3. If you have not previously held a government office, what community or policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.)

A seasoned legislative and political advocate, I will be ready on day one to get to work on behalf of my 182nd District constituents in the State Capitol. In the last five years, as Senior Vice President of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), I have been responsible for writing and passing more than twenty-five state and local laws, including right here in Pennsylvania, opening up billions of dollars in contracts and economic development to small business owners, including minorities, veterans, those with disabilities, and LGBTQ-owned entrepreneurs.

During my time at NGLCC, I have been honored by organizations throughout Pennsylvania and across America for my leadership on issues including saving small businesses, fighting for equality, anti-gun-violence, and civic engagement. I am especially proud to serve locally on the Board of Directors of the Global Philadelphia Association and the William Way LGBT Community Center.

My passion for service and taking care of my neighbors is rooted in a belief that when we all do better, we all do better. That is why I dedicate myself to fighting for affordable and inclusive healthcare; essential

services for our seniors and veterans; gun free, fully-funded schools; supporting our arts and culture institutions; preserving our environment; and protecting Philadelphians' right to vote.

I helped found the PhillyVoting.org initiative, expanding voter registration and civic confidence in the City of Philadelphia during the toughest days of the pandemic. I have also fought tirelessly for a free and fair election for all of my neighbors — a crucial component of our democracy.

When not actively fighting for justice and equity, you'll find me volunteering throughout Philadelphia as a mentor with AmeriCorps PA and Students Demand Action PA; fundraising for the Philadelphia Diversity & Inclusion Summit and the Liberty City Democrats; and supporting Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Gay Officers Action League Philadelphia, and Democratic Jewish Outreach PA.

Philadelphia-area references include:

- 1) Zach Wilcha, Executive Director, Independence Business Alliance**
- 2) Greg DeShields, Executive Director, Tourism Diversity Matters**
- 3) Cindy Towers, President and CEO of JURISolutions; Board Member at US Small Business Administration and Women-Owned Law**

4. Please provide copies of all your significant campaign materials, including position papers, advertisement copy, and flyers.

Please see attached supplemental PDF

5. What, if any, endorsements have you received? What others are you seeking?

As of February 1, 2022

PHILADELPHIA LABOR UNIONS:

- RYAN BOYER & LABORERS' DISTRICT COUNCIL ([see release](#))
- PHILADELPHIA MUSICIANS' UNION LOCAL 77* ([see release](#))

*This is their FIRST EVER political endorsement

PROGRESSIVE MEDIA:

- The Washington Blade Newspaper (the US' LGBTQ Paper of Record)
- Latino Connection Magazine
- Affinity, Inc. Magazine

PROGRESSIVE PACS/ORGS:

- Roadmap for Progress
- Building Bridges for America
- Youth Political Strategies

ELECTED & PUBLIC OFFICIALS:

- US Congressman Ritchie Torres
- US Congressman Tony Coelho, Father of *Americans with Disabilities Act*
- State Senator Brad Hoylman
- Brig. General Richard S. Miller, Dpt. Commanding General, 38th Infantry Division (Ret)
- Jimmy Vacca, Former NYC Councilmember
- Ryan Miccio, Human Rights Commissioner, City of Palm Springs

GUN REFORM ADVOCATES:

- Fred Guttenberg, Gun Violence Advocate, Father of Parkland Shooting Victim
- Brandon Wolf, PULSE Shooting Survivor, Gun Violence Advocate

COMMUNITY LEADERS:

- Jim Obergefell, Winning Marriage Equality Plaintiff
- David Mixner, LGBTQ Advocacy Icon
- Dennis & Judy Shepard, Founders of Matthew Shepard Foundation
- Janice Bryant Howroyd, CEO, Philanthropist, and MWBE Leader
- Jeff Zarrillo & Paul Katami, CA Prop 8 Lawsuit Plaintiffs and Activists
- Judith Windsor, Spouse of Marriage Equality Champion Edie Windsor
- Audra McDonald, Actor & Social Justice Advocate
- Jackie Richter, Trans Activist & Construction Industry Pioneer
- George Takei, Actor & AAPI/LGBTQ Activist
- Billy Porter, Actor & HIV/LGBTQ Activist
- Wilson Cruz, Actor & Hispanic/LGBTQ Activist
- Anthony Rapp, Actor & #MeToo/LGBTQ Activist
- Greg Louganis, Olympic Champion and LGBTQ advocate
- George Fernandez, CEO, Latin Connections

6. What is your plan to win this race, including your fundraising goals and strategies.

I couldn't be happier with the momentum and support for my campaign in the 182nd District. With over 700 donors, extensive union and community support, and the most bipartisan legislative experience, we continue to demonstrate winning viability and I am so ready for the primary ahead.

In early February we announced a [record-breaking \\$150,000 raised](#), and have a comprehensive plan to get out the vote for my race as well as fellow Pennsylvania Democrats to help flip the legislature blue.

The fact that we are approaching the primary with so much support from Philadelphia and across the nation signals that seeking to truly help people is the message voters want to hear. From unions to business owners to teachers to community leaders, my neighbors in Philadelphia are fired up and ready to work with me to make a difference. I am ready to knock every door, meet with every neighbor, and earn every vote ahead.

Team LovitzForPA has the ideal mix of experienced statewide consulting support coupled with local political and community engagement experts to GOTV. Primary strategies include:

- Aggressive fundraising strategy that includes daily blocks of call time, virtual and in person (when possible and safe) fundraising events with the support of an expert, experienced finance team
- NGP/VAN + VoteBuilder utilization for targeting (multiple members of the team are experts)
- Extensive labor union and grassroots support for phone banking, door knocking, and other GOTV efforts.
- A robust "in house" and "in office" event schedule to meet voting groups and networks where they are
- Targeted paid media campaign that includes direct mail, social media, and text bank
- Youth vote engagement with local college Dem networks and endorsers like Youth Political Strategies; focused on squads of door knockers, event volunteers, and GOTV promoters

7. What, if any, genders, do you identify with?

Male, using he/him/his pronouns

8. What is your sexual orientation?

Openly gay

9. What is your racial, ethnic identity?

Caucasian; Jewish

ISSUES

Please note: Although many of the following questions may be answered “yes” or “no” you should feel free to elaborate if doing so would provide a clearer statement of your position. If you believe you do not have enough information to answer a question, or have not formed an opinion, please say so.

I. OVERALL

What would be your three highest priorities as a legislator? Explain.

- 1) **STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMY FOR ALL: BUSINESSES, UNIONS, AND WORKING FAMILIES** - From promoting higher wages, to paid family leave, to an unprecedented investment in affordable housing and small business support, I will work to make the life of working families in the District easier and more successful. We must make state resources work for the people.

- 2) **SAVING LIVES AND INCREASING PUBLIC SAFETY, WITH A PUSH FOR EQUALITY & JUSTICE FOR ALL** - I will not let crime be a barrier to a better life in Philadelphia. Across PA we must fund public safety equitably, finally ban ghost guns and assault weapons, toughen requirements, and reverse gun show loopholes and private buyer exemptions. I will be one of the most vocal champions for women, BIPOC communities, veterans, those with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ citizens across America– and will be one of the strongest, most experienced voices fighting for their rights and opportunities in Harrisburg.

- 3) **CHAMPIONING STRONGER SCHOOLS AND A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT-** Fixing the public school funding formula is critical to my campaign as the son and brother of teachers. Our students deserve an equal, equitable education regardless of zip code or antiquated spending priorities like vouchers. Ensuring our Commonwealth is doing its part to protect our home and investing in cleaner solutions is a moral and economic imperative. I will help Leadership demonstrate that Going Green and growing our economy are not mutually exclusive.

II. Education

- 1) Do you believe public college, or community college, should be tuition free?

I believe every student in PA deserves a quality education and an opportunity to attend a higher education. Without question community colleges, technical schools, and apprentice programs should be cost free and accessible to everyone. We should deeply reduce costs through subsidies and offer more scholarships and work placement programs that put public colleges within reach of more Pennsylvanians than ever before. I personally benefited from a

state-provided scholarship that allowed me to leave college with minimal debt—and I look forward to making sure everyone can have a similar experience in PA. They deserve it.

2) What role do you believe standardized tests should play in evaluating teachers, schools and students, if any?

Standardized tests tell us how a student did on that one particular test— creating tremendous pressure to perform on the student, the teachers, and the parents, especially from historically underserved communities. Additional testing is not the way to measure behavior and support growth, additional funding is. I fully agree with PFT & PSEA’s positions that additional tests and metrics like those outlined in SB751 take time away from educating our students and take already-strapped funds away from crumbling school infrastructure. Annual testing in grades 3-8 and once in high school is still required, but should not be a primary metric for school funding and teacher support.

3) What factors do you believe should be considered in determining *overall levels* of school funding in the Commonwealth, and funding *per school district*?

Working to fix the funding formula that starves our schools of resources is critical to my campaign as the son and brother of union teachers. Making our schools safer, smarter, and better, as well as improving teacher salaries and access to technological resources is key to our kids’ success. Barely more than 10% of funds in PA run through the ‘formula’ used to assess equitable distribution.

After talking with many teachers and PFT members, I fully agree that we must exponentially increase that percentage so as much as much funding as possible flows through such a formula for each district. Equity in education begins with an acknowledgment that the physical needs of inner city schools in Philadelphia may be different than rural schools in Central and Western PA. No student from any community should be forced into a substandard (and possibly/often unsafe) learning environment because of their zip code and an antiquated spending formula.

In Philadelphia’s school district, specifically, corporate tax break/loopholes need to be rectified and made fair, while also establishing many more revenue lines, including PILOT payments and fines on developers who fail to meet standards, to support essential school repairs and educational equity initiatives.

4) Approximately 33% of Philadelphia students are enrolled in charter schools. What is your position on the expansion of charter schools? Should they be given public money

via vouchers or similar programs (like ESAs)? What role do you think public schools play in our city?

Charter Schools hurt public education. Period. By being allowed to receive comparable state and local funds and yet be free of oversight and basic (but essential) requirements around certifications, testing, and equitable enrollment, these schools create a 'separate and unequal' educational system. This system also hurts hardworking union teachers and paraprofessionals in education.

Charters regularly utilize lower paid staff on short-term contracts, increasing staff turnover which is both costly and disruptive to students. These problems are compounded by the many ways funds are siphoned to charter schools from public schools, whether through 529/ESA code manipulation, vouchers, or tax credits. Knowing that Educational Improvement Tax Credits – paid for by the public – do not prevent schools from arbitrarily shifting enrollment and academic standards, it's time that we overhaul the use of public funds that work against public education and demand increased transparency and accountability for all school systems.

III. Budget and Taxes

1) Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to permit progressive taxation in PA, in whole or part?

We do not build "rich" and "poor" bridges; there aren't "red" and "blue" sources of clean water; our firefighters do not use private roads to save lives in our cities. Every Pennsylvanian benefits from the expenditure of taxpayer dollars, but not every Pennsylvanian fairly contributes to the funds from which we draw. I was—and continue to be— a vocal supporter of Senator Costa's 2017 SB555, the "Fair Share Tax." Closing budget and public investment deficits, especially those painful cuts to programs that support minority communities, without increasing taxes on working people and the middle class is not only possible— but already happening in several states. We must educate the public on the urgent need for an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution allowing us to finally enact a fair, graduated tax system.

2) What changes if any would you support in the corporate net income tax levels? See this: <https://krc-pbpc.org/issues/corporate-income-taxes/>

Simultaneously we must address the staggering corporate tax break loopholes that have stripped PA of essential funding for education, healthcare, and social services. To make PA attractive to new business investment and job-creation we need to accelerate plans to lower PA's 9.9% corporate tax rate (the second highest

in America) but that must come with legislation to reduce a company's ability to game the system and cheat the public of essential funds. We, the taxpayers, offset their tax burdens but do not see nearly enough fair repayment into the system from which these corporations benefit.

3) What changes, if any, would you support in the personal income tax?

Every individual and business owner I've spoken to says the same thing: make personal income taxation simpler in PA. We must simplify and reduce the nearly ten classes of income and finally allow individuals who also own/start businesses to apply losses in one class against gains in another.

4) Do you support the [Fair Share Tax Plan](#) proposed by the PA Budget and Policy Center, with its emphasis on raising the tax rate on unearned income?

I do! See answer 1 above— we are under-taxing the most valuable income in the Commonwealth: inherited and protected income classes, usually held by the wealthiest Pennsylvanians.

5) Do you support full elimination of the Delaware loophole?

Yes— but with the important caveat that the Commonwealth address the reasons why businesses feel the need to incorporate in DE and not PA, including secrecy, access to capital, etc. My unique experience working with the SBA and countless Chambers of Commerce across America make me uniquely qualified to help Democratic leadership address this loophole and grow PA's small business development resources.

6) Do you support a tax on fracking, and at what level?

Yes, I concur with Governor Wolf's tax on fracking to incentivize modernization of sustainable energy opportunities. Our PA labor unions and environmental networks can help us strike the balance needed to both protect the environment AND protect jobs.

7) Do you support the Keystone Opportunity Zone program? Would you introduce legislation to eliminate it, or to limit the number of times a parcel's KOZ designation can be renewed or extended? More generally, do you support tax breaks to lure or retain businesses?

During the pandemic I helped dozens of Philadelphia business owners with PPP and other essential economic development grants, and many asked about how they can relocate or connect with KOZs throughout PA. There is definitely interest in specialized economic development corridors as a way to incentivize innovation and job creation. And while my vast experience working with small and

minority-owned businesses has shown me that tax breaks and incentives work (and should be utilized equitably), they cannot go unchecked and unmonitored. The renewal process should be much more transparent, with public input and easily accessible metrics reported by the KOZ authority to show both social and economic impact

IV. Public Banking

Would you support the creation of a Pennsylvania Public Bank, modeled after the Bank of North Dakota, and/or the creation of local public banks in PA cities and counties?

YES! We need specialized alternatives to major for-profit banks that drive investment directly into our communities here at home. My time working with small businesses in minority communities, especially in navigating CDFIs and access to capital, have shown me how valuable localized options with minimal interest rates and experts proficient in community issues can be. I am in favor of a Public Banking option to supplement private options that can help prevent lending contractions (as World Bank studies have shown can happen in public-only markets). More choice and more accessible options is *always* a good thing for helping working families and communities grow!

V. Women's Rights

1) Do you believe there should be any restrictions on a woman's right to choose? If so, what?

NO. A woman has a RIGHT to her own healthcare choices free of judgment or legal restrictions. Period, full stop. As Signe Espinoza, Interim Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Pennsylvania Advocates said, "Our state could be next. We must come together to protect access to safe and legal abortion." Not on my watch. This fight is deeply personal to me.

Most Saturday mornings you'll find me in a yellow vest serving as a patient escort volunteer at the Planned Parenthood in Center City Philadelphia. I grew up with two older sisters in a home run primarily by a Mom that instilled the importance of hearing, seeing, and respecting women and their right to choose -- always. Since my earliest advocacy memories as a college student, standing in solidarity with women who deserve unfettered, unquestioned access to healthcare and medical

privacy is a part of my DNA. The women of Philadelphia deserve someone who will fight with all they have to protect them and ensure their freedom of choice and right to privacy is always defended -- and they'll always have that in me.

2) What additional protections should be enacted into law to protect women's health care in light of the pending decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to override or sharply curtail *Roe v. Wade*?

The legislature should have been passed legislation that guarantees the rights in the *Roe v Wade* Supreme Court decision into law years ago. But the urgency of the current war on women demands we get this done now. I am a proud volunteer and donor to both Planned Parenthood and NARAL, and it's been an honor to advocate for womens' healthcare protections in the many states where I actively work with legislators, including right here in PA. We must also drastically increase prenatal care funding and community healthcare resources to help mothers and families succeed at every step in their family planning journey.

3) Would you support proposals to ensure that women and men working in the Commonwealth receive equal pay for equal work?

Absolutely! To paraphrase President Biden's feelings on the Lilly Ledbetter Act, 'Equal pay is about justice, fairness, and who we are as Pennsylvanians.' And because pay equity is directly correlated to racial justice, ensuring equal pay for equal work has the most profound impact on those already taking home the least money for their labor.

VI. Children and Families

1) Should the state require businesses to provide paid family leave?

Yes – and it should be supported with state funds to help this happen at more small and minority-owned businesses. I have seen how essential this is for working families as my nonprofit's representative to the *Mainstreet Alliance's Small Business for Paid Leave* coalition. I will bring that experience fighting for leave and expanded family benefits to Harrisburg.

2) Should the state provide universal availability of affordable childcare? If yes, how would you achieve this?

Yes! Just like housing, primary barriers to quality child care and early childhood education are affordability and access. Early childhood education and access to consistent care not only benefits the long term outcomes of our kids, but is essential to putting work families – especially moms – back into the workforce.

All legislators in Harrisburg should be vocally supporting the PA Rescue Plan's goals to give \$50 million in grants to businesses and other employers that offer child care for their workers on site. We should also be demanding that new construction, especially for high-density affordable housing options, include investment in local childcare and education trusts.

Among the reasons the Laborers District Council was my earliest labor endorsement was my commitment to fighting for improved mass transportation projects in the Philly area, as well as across the Commonwealth, which would help move communities and childcare options closer together than ever before. Public-private partnerships with developers and technology companies can further help shrink the funding gap by providing space, tools, and free advertising to help promote childcare options in the communities who need them most.

VII. Environment

1) Do you support a ban on fracking in whole or part? Explain.

Unless we fundamentally tackle climate change, all other social and economic policies we work on are just bandaids on a broken planet. Ensuring our Commonwealth is doing its part to address these issues is a moral and economic imperative. That includes not supporting new fracking operations, and using all available tools to tax and walk back – and ultimately replace – fracking in PA. My positions on environmental justice and clean energy transitions are among the reasons youth voter networks – including Youth Political Strategies PAC– have endorsed me; our work on fracking etc. today ensures they have a tomorrow.

2) Would you support banning the use of single-use plastic bags?

Yes; not only for the well-demonstrated environmental outcomes, but also for the sustainable business outcomes that emerge from making “green business” desirable and incentivizing the purchase of locally-made reusable bags.

3) Do you think Philadelphia should be compelled or induced to sell PGW?

PGW has embedded itself in the bedrock of Philadelphia, much like its aging pipes. Since the last major attempt to divest from PGW in 2014 report after report has found that PGW trades in “predatory, anti-competitive” practices that reduce choice and accessibility for those who need it most. As an immediate sale would

harm low wage workers and small businesses in the supply chain, I believe working with the PUC and state oversight boards to implement binding changes that lead to strong public management of PGW will be a viable path to improving equity in PGW's distribution and business practices and and drastically increasing public faith and involvement in the process.

4) What measures would you support to move PA off its reliance on fossil fuels and expand use of renewable energy sources?

A clear majority of Pennsylvania voters (55 percent, per polling from the Ohio River Valley Institute) say they support the immediate or eventual end of natural gas drilling and reliance on fossil fuels in the Commonwealth. I've always believed the voice of the people should be the force that guides how legislators address critical issues.

Natural gas, agriculture, and manufacturing are fundamental parts of the Pennsylvania economy, and it's time our state government followed the lead of progressive corporations and enterprising municipalities that are investing heavily in cleaner production and pragmatic transitions to energy and waste alternatives. By acting now we can limit increases in the frequency and intensity of flooding, heatwaves, wildfires and other extreme weather events that cost PA taxpayers billions each year. Each step taken to curb emissions and rectify our impact in PA results in countless new private and public sector jobs— many of them union.

5) What criteria would you use in making appointments to the P.U.C.?

As a current special advisor on economic equity and sustainability to both the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and Maryland Public Services Commission (PSC), I know first-hand what happens when we have PUC Commissioners who put corporate profits and personal relationships before public safety, accessibility, and environmental longevity.

6) What steps would you take to ensure environmental justice in the placement and remediation of structures that pollute?

Money talks, and we must use it to make polluters listen. Far too many are getting massive abatements and stimulus funds without being directly tied to measurable environmental impact.

State oversight— especially for environmental impact/sustainability – is essential and nonnegotiable. Corporations and NGOs have a huge role to play in helping offset the tax burden on communities, especially by finding and promoting small, minority-owned firms to participate on these infrastructure projects. Data shows

that smaller and minority-owned companies have more visible and accountable commitments to sustainability than major corporations, and should be utilized more than ever to ensure environmental justice and economic development for the communities most affected by decades of environmental damage.

Many PA-based major nonprofit institutions with considerable endowments, land holdings, and trusts – even those doing exceptional work in our communities – are leveraging their tax exempt status to avoid taxes that would further help the communities they serve and protect the environment around them. It is time for PA – and the federal government– to review how large nonprofit entities that could be leading the charge on environmental justice research are being held accountable for environmental damage. For example, the University of Pennsylvania (which pays \$0 in PILOT payments vs. Harvard which pays nearly \$4 million per year to its home city), does not pay into the systems that have to rectify environmental damage from new facilities and increased traffic. PILOT programs establish a binding agreement that creates trust and good-faith between nonprofits and their “taxing jurisdictions,” demonstrating the interconnectedness of those institutions with the taxpaying communities who help them succeed.

7) What, if any, other measures would you support to preserve or improve our environment? (water issues, park preservation, detoxification of school buildings, etc.)

I think Governor Wolf’s 2021 decision to establish a Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) Office of Environmental Justice, headed by a director of Environmental Justice appointed by the DEP secretary, is one of the most important steps taken to put real environmental policy and equity leaders in a position to affect change in the Commonwealth.

I would support expanding the funding, scope, and authority of that office. That could ensure experienced environmental justice leaders work with every executive department to ensure our values to protect PA’s air, water, and land are reflected in state spending. I firmly believe more green space is more good space, and I will support funding and community investment opportunities to expand public parks, environmentally conscious recreational centers, and more that connect our neighborhoods more directly to the planet around them.

My years of working at the intersection of government and small businesses contracts, especially those focused on sustainability, have affirmed that “going green” and growing our workforce and economy need not be mutually exclusive. In fact, green jobs can be a catalyst for exponentially more union infrastructure and cleanup projects that put our communities to work.

VIII. Criminal Justice

1) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed?

Yes. Like “No Knock” warrants and other “at will” options afforded to law enforcement, stop and frisk programs lack accountability and only further deepen divides between police and minority communities. I saw it further erode trust in law enforcement during my time in other cities, and that is the last thing we need now.

2) How would you deal with the problem of mass incarceration of minorities, particularly minority youth?

Rather than treating mental illness and the root causes of violence among minority communities in America, we have overcriminalized so many populations that would be fully-functioning members of society if they received the help they deserve.

In 2018 I first volunteered to help advance pro-diversion policies around the country when I met leaders from the National Association of Drug Court Professionals at a conference sponsored by the National Veteran Business Development Council (NVBDC). I devoured their research into mental healthcare alternatives to incarceration coupled with workforce skill development / small business startup training and witnessed the profound change in the emotional and physical well-being of these offenders when treated with dignity and medical support.

Once again, the public-private funding model– connecting state healthcare dollars to private investments in workforce development– will be essential in ensuring we spread the word about available diversion programs to law enforcement agencies across PA, while also working to leverage all forms of media to further remove the stigma of mental health and fear of seeking help from state-funded care as a solution that helps all communities in PA live better.

3) Should marijuana be fully legalized?

YES! This is essential for racial justice and the economic growth throughout PA! It’s time to legalize and regulate. We can’t afford to wait. We can begin by legalizing cannabis, expunging records, and investing in Black and Brown communities affected by systemic racism and over-policing. We must move minority-owned dispensaries and supply chain operators directly to the table of opportunity to ensure revenues are kept in the hands of those who need and deserve them most, not out of state investors without ties to the Pennsylvania communities they serve.

4) Should privately-owned prisons be permitted in Pennsylvania?

NO. Private prisons incentivize over policing and criminalization of communities with the least resources to defend themselves in the justice system. Removing private prisons helps break down the flow of money from those who benefit from the broken system, rather than investing in fixing it.

5) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania?

YES! Thankfully, PA has “Banned the Box” for public sector worker applications, opening up life-changing economic opportunities to thousands of potential workers. Fifteen states have further mandated the removal of conviction history questions from job applications for private employers, but PA is not yet one of them. I will strongly push for legislation that more directly incentivizes the hiring of ex-offenders, increasing the time WOTC Tax Credits are available to employers beyond the current two-year statute. We must also fully-fund accessible mental healthcare for ex-offenders in the workforce to help with crime-related PTSD and other mental health barriers to long-term employment.

6) Should PA continue to build new prisons?

No, but they should be spending exponentially more on rehabilitation and mental healthcare facilities that can be part of redirective prosecution options.

7) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain.

Yes, but not at the expense of the health and safety of prisoners at already overcrowded facilities.

8) Do you support an end to the death penalty?

I do, but I also respect the wide array of thoughts on both the death penalty and life without parole– we must take input from all sides, including both victims and inmate advocates, to ensure everyone involved is on the record when decisions about the death penalty are adjudicated.

9) When if ever, should a juvenile be tried as an adult?

We are overcriminalizing too many young people, particularly in PA. This sets them up for failure in future career and developmental opportunities. I support the

current statutory exclusions to PA's juvenile justice codes for murder, crimes with a deadly weapon, etc – with the stipulation that all other avenues for psychiatric review, rehabilitation, etc be exhausted first.

10) As a general matter, what do you think the state can do to reduce the murder rate in Philadelphia, while maintaining respect for civil liberties and the overall need for decarceration of our city?

The state's precedent for addressing the opioid emergency shows that we know that a top-down, statewide commitment is essential for dealing with a murder and violent crime crisis of this nature. No economic or physical resource for this crisis should be off the table; but we must also ensure that civil liberties and due process are always protected. When our neighbors across the Commonwealth live in fear, our businesses and our schools suffer. Our state legislature has the power to help stop that suffering and rebuild trust and safety in our city. Inaction is a choice, as is not investing in the communities where crime is hurting our chances to grow.

Gun violence is a statewide crisis, but it undeniably occurs in most significant concentrations in the regions occupied by majority-minority communities. When our neighbors across the Commonwealth live in fear, our businesses suffer. Our state legislature has the power to help stop that suffering and rebuild trust and safety in our city. Inaction is a choice. One of the easiest choices it can make is giving local governments the ability to enact hyperlocal solutions to gun violence. Preemption kills. Period.

As I have said throughout my career passing legislation across America and right here in PA: *Red or Blue, everyone sees Green*. The key to getting more anti-change members of the legislature to support gun control and safety measures is to show them the money.

In 2020, gun violence in Philadelphia cost the government an estimated \$195 million in medical and criminal justice costs alone. When social costs such as pain, suffering, lost wages, and economic productivity are factored in, the financial toll of violence in the city is staggering. In fact, each homicide is estimated to cost from \$10 to \$19 million, according to the CDC. The 499 homicides in Philadelphia last year had an estimated economic cost of over \$4.99 billion. State leaders have both a moral and economic imperative to invest in evidence-based violence intervention and prevention programs.

As Adam Garber, executive director of CeaseFirePA, illustrated so clearly in a July 2021 Inquirer op-ed "Community groups haven't heard a word about the gun violence prevention money promised in Philly's new budget": "And community organizations who have been squeezing life-saving actions out of every dollar are

still waiting for the infusion of \$20 million. Not a dime has flowed to groups working tirelessly to prevent even more violence in our neighborhoods every day. The initial announcement proposed forming a community advisory committee to support the grant process and ensure the money goes where it can have the greatest impact. That committee has yet to form, and no call for community proposals that could already be saving lives has been issued.”

While plans to distribute the monies are in motion, we cannot afford any delays. We must get local groups the funds they need to act in their neighborhoods while we work to move our legislators in Harrisburg to act for the good of every Pennsylvanian.

Advocating for sensible gun laws that protect our neighborhoods and families is personal to me. As an ardent supporter of (and regular volunteer for) Students Demand Action, Everytown for Gun Safety, and Cease Fire PA, I will continue advancing effective gun policies to keep our families and communities safe. See a recent video of me working with the Beloved Care Project in Philadelphia fighting gun violence [here](#).

IX. Campaign Finance Reform

Would you support legislation to provide public financing for state and local election campaigns?

Yes, it's a key to equity and greater diverse representation in government! I witnessed the impact of the level political playing field during my time working on elections and legislation in New York City. By reducing out of pocket costs to campaigns and setting specific rules and boundaries on fundraising, more “everyday Pennnsylvanians” will have the chance to run and win, bringing the lived experience we need much more of in Harrisburg, rather than the rotating door of wealthy and privately-backed candidates.

X. Labor

1) Would you support legislation to strengthen protection for workers trying to form or join a union?

YES! To grow and diversify unions in PA, current and future members need to understand that union members in the United States earn significantly more than non-union workers in the same roles. More Americans than ever are working in

low-wage jobs and are without health care and the means to save for retirement, start a family, or buy a home. To jumpstart the American economy, especially after this pandemic, let's make it easier than ever to organize and allow higher wages to reach more Americans.

As I proudly stated in my Labor Day 2021 op-ed, "Loving Philadelphia means supporting unions." As the only union member in this race for District 182, the early and ongoing support of labor has meant so much to me and the communities I hope to serve. I believe in unions. I will fight for unions. And I will always be proud to carry my union card in my wallet– including on the PA House floor in 2022.

I joined my first union almost 15 years ago. From my first days I immediately felt the support I lacked before. My working conditions improved dramatically, as did pay, healthcare, educational programs, and on and on and on. When the chips are down, like during a pandemic, it's nice to be reminded we are not alone on our journey. And who exemplifies that better than a union? And yet union busting forces, false media narratives, and a general lack of understanding of union benefits to diverse workers has led to mistrust that joining and growing our labor unions is a good thing. Equality of opportunity is key to unlocking the outcomes we all want to see for our working families.

We need to meet young, diverse potential union members where they are: on social media and other digital outlets. A major investment from the unions and the networks that support them into messaging/marketing campaigns that explain how essential unions are to PA – and all of America– is an essential first step. We must supplement those efforts with after-schools recruitment programs into apprenticeships, with diverse union members telling their personal stories of success through union membership. Members must "see themselves" in the stories of solidarity and opportunity we share. That also means ensuring union leadership reflects the rich diversity of its membership and that union workforces enforce a strict zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, hate, and harrasment.

One of the most important lessons I have learned from working across America with unions is the power of standing shoulder to shoulder with people who come from different walks of life. You quickly come to understand that you share a common goal: a better way of life for you, your family, and your community. Unions are the living embodiment of "when we all do better, we all do better." I have seen and experienced firsthand the power of building a bigger table, adding chairs to that table, and coming together to bake a bigger pie to share with everyone at that table. That is how you have an equitable recovery.

2) Should the minimum wage be increased? If so, to what level and should the increase be indexed to inflation?

YES! Pennsylvania has had a minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour since 2009. Over a decade later the cost of housing, food, healthcare, education etc has risen but the state's minimum wage has not. It is long past time to rectify this. Progressive states across America have seen that increasing the minimum wage increases labor force participation and results in increased consumer spending by working families. PA should enact a \$15 minimum wage with statutory requirements that such wages be revisited regularly to ensure Pennsylvanians are not burdened by cost of living expenses. Also, "Industry Wages" (ie: service jobs, bartending, etc) are unlivable at \$2.83 while relying entirely on tips; this model also needs to be increased and ultimately phased out. Tax-based incentives for employers to enact wage increases that meet inflationary trends should be enacted now while we shape legislation to make PA a competitive and attractive place to work and live.

3) Do you believe that Philadelphia and other municipalities should continue to be pre-empted from increasing the minimum wage on their own?

NO! Just like my feelings on combating gun violence and incarceration, local governments need to be able to make the choices that will help them and their people succeed. Preemption must be rolled back.

4) Do you support privatization of retail liquor sales in Pennsylvania? Are there any other services that you believe should be considered for privatization?

No! As UFCW 1776 President Young stated when fighting this policy in hearings this year, states that have privatized their liquor authorities have seen staggeringly higher taxes and costs to offset what they lost. Pennsylvania cannot afford to lose over \$760 million in revenue and force more than 5,000 Pennsylvanians out of work. Even as an ardent supporter of the role of private businesses and market forces, we absolutely need to keep most of PA's publicly managed industries and services public, to ensure transparency, oversight, and efficiency that truly gives back to the taxpayers.

One of my key philosophies for public service— both now and when elected to the PA House— is that a Representative should ask every constituent and stakeholder two questions: 1) How can I help with your problem? 2) And how quickly can we work to rectify the cause of your problem so it doesn't affect others? Similarly, I believe government-run public services should be framed around what makes Pennsylvania stronger, healthier, safer, and smarter. Investments in education, especially for essential trade and labor-based skills, coupled with job placement and support for veterans, the disabled, and those from historically marginalized backgrounds will have profound impacts on health outcomes and economic development through state-managed industries.

5) Philadelphia remains the most impoverished major city and about 75% of our residents lack bachelor's degrees. What policies would you implement to ensure that decent, high-paying jobs created here are accessible to the majority of our population, not just the relatively well-educated and already well off?

XI. Reforming Legislative Districts

1) Do you support legislation that would (1) form an independent commission, and (2) apply sound methodologies, to draw all congressional, State House, and Senate districts fairly in Pennsylvania?

Yes! As a Democratic party and a Commonwealth we owe a major debt of gratitude to House Leader McClinton and Senate Leader Costa for bringing fairness and equity back to the redistricting process. It's encouraging to see neighboring boundaries also change shape to reflect the rich diversity of new residents and new businesses flowing into Philadelphia, and across PA.

I would support exploring independent, fair and transparent methods to use data to bring greater enfranchisement of voters to the Commonwealth. We must ensure those processes equitably reflect prior gerrymandering and the needs of underrepresented minority voting constituencies.

XII. Public Health

1) Would you support state legislation to create a single-payer system in PA?

I have been a longtime proponent of a Medicare for All option alongside private options for every citizen who wants it. I hope to champion such policies in Harrisburg while also working to send essential funds to local, community-based health clinics.

2) How would you reduce or eliminate the racial disparities in the provision of health care, in particular the distribution of lifesaving COVID vaccines and medications?

We must bring medical support directly to the people who need it most. During the pandemic I volunteered with several agencies across Philadelphia to help rectify healthcare inequities by bringing vaccinations directly to the most vulnerable –

and often most difficult to engage – minority communities in Center City. By talking with so many neighbors from so many walks of life I heard first-hand about the urgency for accessible, affordable healthcare options for every Pennsylvanian.

The community-based facilities I mentioned above have the most intimate knowledge of the physical and mental healthcare needs of the neighbors they serve without the bureaucracy of major private institutions. I also want to invest heavily in telemedicine and remote care for those who need it most, while also ensuring we have sufficient technological and language support for the communities who will most benefit from these resources. A healthier Pennsylvania is a more successful Pennsylvania.

My belief in statewide support for improving minority healthcare also ensures expanded funding and resources to address our growing epidemics. According to the PA Attorney General’s office one in four Pennsylvanians is/knows someone directly affected by the opioid crisis. It affects every community and every demographic; so this is truly a Commonwealth-wide issue of critical importance. I hope to be part of a bipartisan legislative push for exponentially increased funding for access to Nalaxone, as well as “Drug Deactivation Pouches” at every point of sale in PA.

The largest organization of physicians in the state, The Pennsylvania Medical Society, endorses plans for safe, monitored injection sites. And yet, courts and local governments refuse to allow even small-scale experiments to help save lives in their communities. The status quo is not working, so any attempt to alleviate suffering and help users find a path to recovery is worth our exploration.

XIV. Housing

1) How would you deal with the growing affordable housing gap in PA, both in the homeownership and rental markets?

As a Board of Directors member at a major national housing nonprofit for minorities, working to make owning, renting, and repairing homes for every community is a deeply personal commitment of mine.

Housing-related expenses including rents, mortgages, and repairs are by far the most burdensome to working families trying to make ends meet and improve outcomes for their children. I look forward to working with both public and private sector leaders to enact essential reforms to zoning, taxes, and subsidies so we can put people into safe, secure housing and help them start building a financially stable future. As in most social services, reaching those in most need of housing support can be the most difficult step. Just as we invested in Navigators for the Affordable Care Act, I hope to help develop mobile “street teams” across PA that bring housing resources, information, and sign-up forms to those in need on the most helpful physical/digital platforms and in the languages most needed.

Major PA corporations and development agencies have the largest role to play in helping fund affordable housing initiatives as they will see immediate increases in available workforce participants and loyal consumers with disposable income. Every step taken to ease the burden of paying for a home allows a PA resident to invest in their work, their child’s education, and in the economy of their community.

As my neighbors throughout Center City will agree: we *must* invest in dealing with the root causes of homelessness and housing insecurity that keep folks on the street and not using city and state resources to get and stay safely housed.

Philadelphia has the highest poverty rate of the nation's 10 largest cities, and inaction locally or anywhere in the Commonwealth, is an active choice made to ignore the root causes: income inequality and lack of affordable housing. New development— both residential and industrial- is essential for PA’s competitiveness in the 21st century. However, ‘no strings attached’ credits and abatements further exacerbate the root causes of homelessness by robbing cities of essential funds to address the problem. I hope to see legislation introduced in PA that would require new development that receives taxpayer funded breaks to pay directly into community investment funds focused on homelessness and public safety.

These funds will be utilized to build and repair essential shelters and vouchers for affordable housing alternatives, increase rapidly accessible physical and mental healthcare, ensure nutritious food reaches the homeless, and invest in educational programs that help the homeless reenter the workforce. This is a particularly timely moment to address homelessness with the post-pandemic glut of unused/empty commercial real estate; we must make rezoning easier and more efficient so cities across PA can responsibly utilize these buildings for the public good, including as homeless resource centers.

2) Would you support a mandate requiring landlords to show good cause for evictions?

Yes! But we must go even further to ensure those with the most need for support in the face of eviction always have it. That includes putting our weight behind a comprehensive Tenants' Bill of Rights that would, among its benefits, help with expunging eviction records that makes it nearly impossible to obtain safe and decent housing if the landlord's claim is found unwarranted. We must also ensure access to counsel and legal support for those being affected by eviction notices and landlord threats.